

RI Bays, Rivers, and Watersheds Coordination Team

Organizational Meeting – August 30, 2004, 10:00 AM – Noon

Narragansett Bay Commission, Conference Room, One Service Road, Providence

Meeting Summary

1. Greeting – J. Joseph Garrahy, Interim Chair

- Governor Donald Carcieri has appointed former Governor J. Joseph Garrahy as the *Interim* Chair of the Coordination Team until such time that a full-time Chair, as described in the legislation, can be appointed. Governor Garrahy has requested that the Coastal Institute support team of Peter August, Chip Young, and Jim Boyd continue their administrative duties to support the work of the Coordination Team.
- This meeting between the Coordination Team members, the Governor's Commission Steering Committee, and Governor's Commission Panel Chairs is an organizational meeting. The first official meeting of the Coordination Team will be held when the Coordination team can meet with members of the Scientific and Public Advisory Committees.

2. Discussion of Coordination Team charges and organizational structure

- Mark Adelman of the Governor's Office provided the following points:
 - 1) The Coordination Team consists of the 7 members as defined in statute and a Chair. Supporting the Coordination Team are the Environmental and Economic Monitoring Collaboratives, and the Scientific and Public Advisory Committees.
 - 2) The governor's office desires to maintain the existing Governor's Commission panels and their members for the interim to continue working for the Coordination Team. Panel should forward work to one of the four designated Coordination Team Committees, who would then forward to the Coordination Team
 - 3) The governor's office supports the proposed Coordination Team organizational chart, but is open to other suggestions. The intent is to create a seamless transition of the Governor's Commission into the Coordination Team.
 - 4) It is the Governor's office responsibility to form the Scientific and Public Advisory Panels. As provided in statute, Governor Carcieri will appoint members to these panels. It is likely that many of the appointments will be existing Governor's Commission and panel members.
 - 5) It is hope that the Coordination Team will adopt the Governor's Commission charges, as specified in Executive Order 03-16, at its first official meeting.

Questions/Comments

Question: Will the Environmental and Economic Monitoring Collaboratives mirror the composition of the panels?

Response: No, membership of the Environmental Monitoring Collaborative is specified in the statute (defined in H 8641). The Collaborative has already begun its work and has established a webpage. <http://www.ci.uri.edu/Projects/RI-Monitoring/default.html>

The Economic Monitoring Collaborative has two members defined in statute (See H 8359). Other members will be added as needed.

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Comments: There are no Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) represented on the Coordination Team and little if any presence within the proposed committees. This is a fundamental problem with the legislation that needs to be addressed. The State's Habitat Restoration Team is a good model for demonstrating effectiveness and cooperation among state agencies and NGOs. It's important to have NGOs in the design.

Comment: The structure of the Coordination Team and its committees was established to include only those entities, in this case state agencies, that have regulatory or oversight authority in environmental issues and natural resources.

Comment: It seems that the Environmental Monitoring Collaborative is the place to have discussion and coordinate work of the NGOs.

Comment: Since many grants are directed to NGOs, there may be a potential conflict of interest if NGOs sit on the Coordination Team that may be issuing such grants.

Comment: As presently proposed, the Scientific and Public Advisory Committees are composed only of panel chairs. Perhaps others need to be appointed. For example, there would be value in having Save The Bay (STB) as part of the Public Advisory Committee.

Question: What is happening in regard to appointing a full-time Chair to the Coordination team?

Response: In accordance with law, the Governor cannot appoint a chair without the advice and consent of the Senate. Therefore, the earliest we expect to get someone appointed is during the winter when the General Assembly is in session. Moreover, there has not been any allocation of funds in support of the position.

Comment: We need to have someone ready for nomination by January when the Senate is in session.

Question: The key charge to the Coordination Team is to develop a systems level plan. Will the Public Advisory Committee start developing the plan?

Response: Before any work can begin, the Scientific and Public Advisory Committees need to be established and chairs elected. That's why the suggestion of seeding these committees with panel chairs has been proposed in order to get them up and running.

Comment: An outline of the systems level plan only is due by January.

Question: Will the systems level plan include a Chesapeake Bay style agreement?

Response: In terms of a multi-state agreement, the existing work of the Partnership for Narragansett Bay will be transferred to the Coordination Team to continue that effort.

Comment: With respect to the Environmental Monitoring Collaborative, we have no money allocated yet. We will continue with efforts already underway and as a first step develop a "best shot" model, including a budget, for a comprehensive bay and watershed monitoring plan. The proposed budget will first go through the Coordination Team.

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Question: Is it appropriate to put together a proposed budget for the Coordination Team for January?

Response: The statute calls for a budget proposal by January 2007.

Comment: The Coordination Team chair and staff could be funded through the Governor's supplemental budget request and be separate from the 2007 budget. Perhaps it would be prudent to share with the Coordination Team the House Bay Trust Committee budget and timeline.

Comment: The Governor's office will have to plan for the Coordination Team chair and staff expenses in the budget. We have a difficult budget situation now and through the normal budget review process we're looking at every option.

Comment: It seems that we need to plan for a supplemental budget request to fund a chair and staff until the next fiscal year, a budget for 2006 and the Coordination Team budget as required for 2007.

Comment: There are many mutual goals shared by the NBEP and the Coordination Team. However, the NBEP has its own statutory federal requirements and program objectives that may or may not be the same as those of the Coordination Team. The funding provided through the NEP must be directed through the input of a stakeholder-based oversight board, which must include EPA. As proposed in today's structure, the Coordination Team does not meet that requirement for the NBEP, so this suggestion needs to be discussed further.

Comment: The NBEP grant should be reviewed to help the Coordination Team. May need to reprogram some funding to be consistent with the Coordination Team work.

Comment: There appears to be some overlapping decision making. Need to consolidate efforts, as the Environmental Protection Agency is not part of the Coordination Team. Some federal requirements will need to be met in addition to other responsibilities.

Comment: The work of the present Bay Planning panel will be a product of the Coordination Team. Priorities need to be made by the Coordination Team, not the panel. Therefore, it seems best not to have a Bay Planning panel.

Comment: Some panels may not exist in the future as work becomes consolidated. For example, the Coordination Team will assume work of the Bay Planning and Intergovernmental panels. However, folks on existing panels need to be recognized and have a place to participate.

Question: How does the CRMC Marine Development Plan defined in S 3028 fit in with the Coordination Team systems level plan?

Response: It will be developed to fit into the systems level plan.

Comment: We need to ensure that the Coordination Team has a strategy in place; not replace state agency responsibilities.

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Comment: The state does not have an efficient way to move money around for effective use of funds. Perhaps the Coordination team could assist in mutual activities funding.

Comment: In developing the five bills, the General Assembly reviewed the standing authority of existing state agencies. The House worked to create a super structure to put agencies together to promote coordination and collaboration on issues.

Question: What happens to existing Governor's Commission members?

Response: There's lots of overlap in the charges between the Coordination Team and Governor's Commission; and between the Governor's Commission panels and Coordination Team committees.

Comment: Suggest that for the next Coordination Team meeting someone put together a structure for discussion of the Coordination Team.

*Proposal put forth for consideration to initially establish the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) with the chairs of the Nutrient/Bacteria Pollution (Don Pryor), Fisheries/Aquaculture (Dave Bengtson), and Habitat/Resources (Laura Ernst) panels. Further, the Public Advisory Committee (PAC) would be initially formed with the chairs of the Bay Planning (Michael Rauh), Finance (Michael Tikoian), Communication (Chip Young), Intergovernmental (Jeff Grybowski), and Public Access (James Capaldi) panels. The Governor will appoint additional members to these panels at a later date.

Comment: We must take the first step to seed the Scientific and Public Advisory committees and add other members as needed. Also, Massachusetts sits on the Governor's Commission, but is not part of the Coordination Team. We have to include MA in this process.

Comment: Agreed, set up initial committees and then supplement. Coordinating efforts should include EPA, STB, etc.

Comment: The first priority is to have RI agencies coordinating among themselves. The next step is to have more formal relations with Massachusetts and Connecticut.

*It was agreed that the initial members of the SAC and PAC would consist of panel chairs as described above. In addition, the SAC and PAC members were directed to study the legislation (H 8359) and solicit input from their respective panels and dialogue with the Coordination Team to establish proposed additional members for appointment consideration by the Governor.

It was proposed that the Coordination Team meet with the SAC and PAC within the next month to six weeks to review and discuss proposed members.

Section 46-39-1(d) of H 8359 requires representation of the RI Economic Policy Council (RIEPC) and the URI Environment and Natural Resources Economics department, in addition to other members on the Economic Monitoring Collaborative. On behalf of the Coordination Team, Mike Walker agreed to contact Professor Jim Anderson at URI ENRE and Paul Choquette at RIPEC to set up an initial meet to get the collaborative organized.

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Comment: It may be helpful for the Economic Monitoring Collaborative to review the Oregon benchmarks program for economic metrics. The URL is:

http://egov.oregon.gov/DAS/OPB/obm_os.shtml.

Some other web sites that may be helpful are:

RIPEC's cities count report which was released last year and which includes goals, targets, and indicators for urban areas (http://www.ripec.org/pdf/urban_indicators.pdf); and Boston Foundation's 2002 Boston Indicators project (<http://www.tbf.org/indicators/>).

Michael Tikoian requested that letters recently sent to Governor Garrahy, addressing the CRMC's programmatic functions and Governor Carcieri's response to the Commission's Phase I report, be forwarded to the Coordination Team.

Comment: We should divide up the system level plan components among the four committees to complete the plan outline.

Comment: It would be helpful for the Coordination Team to review the Senate bills alongside H 8359 to see how the various components fit together.

The meeting was adjourned at Noon.

Please visit the Collaborative website at: www.ci.uri.edu/projects/ri-monitoring for additional information.

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Attendees

Mark Adelman	Governor's Office
Peter August	URI Coastal Institute
Jane Austin	Save The Bay
David Bengtson	URI
Mike Bennett	RIDOT
James Boyd	URI Coastal Institute
Laura Ernst	ESS Group, Inc.
J. Joseph Garrahy	<i>Interim</i> Chair
Grover Fugate	RICRMC
Roger Greene	Narragansett Bay Nat'l Estuarine Research Reserve
Meg Kerr	RI Rivers Council
John O'Brien	RI Dept. of Administration
Paul Pinault	Narragansett Bay Commission
Don Pryor	Brown University
Margherita Pryor	USEPA
Michael Rauh	Washington Trust
Curt Spalding	Save The Bay
Ed Szymanski	RIDOT
Michael Tikoian	RICRMC
Thomas Uva	Narragansett Bay Commission
Dan Varin	Water Resources Board
Fred Vincent	RIDEM
Mike Walker	Economic Development Corporation
Sandra Whitehouse	RI House
Chip Young	Coastal Resources Center